

**MINUTES OF A MEETING  
OF THE  
LOW BARRIER HOMELESS SHELTER TASK FORCE**

**Held: October 26, 2022**

**Task Force Objective:**

**Provide an overview of all the homelessness organizations/studies/programs that are ongoing in the Indianapolis Community that will serve a role within the Task Force. The Ultimate goal will be to develop a low barrier project in close proximity to downtown Indianapolis to address the needs of the homeless population through sustainable housing and clinical services.**

The regular meeting of the Low Barrier Homeless Shelter Task Force was called to order on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at 10:00am at Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room 12, Cardinal Hall.

A roll call of Task Force Members took place, and the following individuals were physically present at the meeting: Co-Chairs Tom McGowan and Deputy Mayor Jeff Bennett, Jennifer Layton and Task Force Members and designates Karen Holly, Rep. Justin Moed, Sen. Jack Sandlin, Christine Blessinger, Dr. Kory Carey, Jake Sipe, Matt Rayburn and members of the staff from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority.

The following individuals were present remotely, via Microsoft Teams: Task Force Members Tim Brown, Rick Alvis, Karen Holly, Schuyler Wood and Dr. Chelsea Haring-Cozzi.

Tom McGowan and Deputy Mayor Jeff Bennett served as Co-Chairs of the meeting and Michael McQuillen served as Secretary.

The September 29, 2022, minutes were moved for approval by Chris Blessinger, seconded by Dr. Kory Carey, and were unanimously approved as submitted.

Jennifer Layton, President and CEO of LTHC Homeless Services in Lafayette, Indiana presented on their efforts to assist area homeless. She discussed the local changes made starting in 2012 with the assistance of IHCDA and detailed the services being offered for their clientele and the Low Barrier Shelter which can currently accommodate up to 10 individuals.

Permanent supportive housing and other safe places are offered as well to peoples in transition to permanent housing options. Case managers and health professionals work with people to help them as they struggle to leave homelessness.

Following the presentation, a discussion of the efforts at LTHC and how Indianapolis can mirror many of their projects. Members also discussed the interest of the State Senate, House and Governor's Office in exploring options for Central Indiana. A more in-depth conversation about the challenges of mental health issues and how Medicare/Medicaid funding impacts these types of issues.

Task Force Member Christine Blessinger of the Department of Corrections gave a brief update on how the release and placements of former incarcerated individuals interrelates to the task force's exploration of low barrier housing. Family, friends, and short-term hotel options are options on the table for the newly released. A landlord mitigation fund is another option to entice landlords to offer space to these individuals.

Co-chairman Jeff Bennett offered a PowerPoint presentation, detailing a rough initial outline draft of Task Force recommendations. Potential solutions include expanded hours and services by the homeless agencies currently in operation in Marion County. A partnership between Indianapolis and IHCDA has allowed the use of the Housing Trust Fund to further assist in these efforts.

A need to coordinate efforts between multiple state agencies and to connect the necessary dots as to how a flow of dollars could potentially assist in a low barrier project will be further explored in a second draft of the task force report. A conversation about how the timing of the state budget and how to best engage legislators in this mission took place. The importance of involving the co-chairs of the Housing Task Force which recently wrapped-up their meetings was discussed.

Co-Chairman McGowan asked for other business, however, no other business was brought forward.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:31am.

Next Task Force Meeting Time and Location – November 23, 2022, at 10am at the Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room 12, Cardinal Hall.